



# Washington State Home Care Quality Authority

Winter 2010

## Updates and Highlights

*By Rick Hall, Executive Director*

The Home Care Quality Authority truly appreciates your interest in our activities and for taking the time to read our Newsletter. Now here is the latest news:

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*The Home Care Quality Authority helps people stay in their own homes and works to improve their quality of life; especially those with complex and/or high care needs. It creates real savings while providing quality services, employment opportunities and viable solutions that help keep our citizens safe.*

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### Governor Proposes to Close HCQA

Governor Gregoire has proposed to eliminate the Home Care Quality Authority, disband its consumer Board and shut down the successful Home Care Referral Registry. Her 2010 supplemental budget would fill a \$2.6 billion hole in the budget for 2009–11 through service eliminations, reductions or suspensions. As required by law, she submitted a budget based on currently available revenue. Among the other programs targeted for elimination are the state Basic Health Plan, Apple Health for children, and the General Assistance Unemployable program. Savings from closure of HCQA would net the State about \$1.2 million or less than .0005 of the budget shortfall.

The Governor has stated that she plans to introduce a second budget in January, which will include a revenue package intended to restore some programs that may include funding for persons with developmental disabilities and/or long-term care provider needs.

The Home Care Quality Authority Board and its staff are working on behalf of everyone who uses in-home care services to ensure that HCQA receives full funding in order to continue to provide cost effective services for people with disabilities all over the state. We are doing this because we know that HCQA is part of the solution to the State's economic crisis and that significant near and long term cost savings will be gained because:

- The Referral Registry operated by HCQA saves over \$6 million dollars per year as an alternative to more expensive long term care options.
- The potential future yearly savings to the State's long term care budget is more than three times that of the entire HCQA budget.
- Since January 2007, consumers have used the Referral Registry to hire individual providers more than 4,500 times.

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## Governor Proposes to Close HCQA, continued

- The Referral Registry provides real and verifiable employment opportunities for our citizens. In FY 08 and FY09, over 3,000 workers found employment through the Referral Registry. This reflects a consumer hiring trend that has been increasing year to year by over 30%.
- In many rural areas of Washington State, loss of the Referral Registry will leave consumers with little or no in-home care options.
- Without the Referral Registry many consumers will face more expensive nursing home care as their only alternative if the Referral Registry is eliminated.

HCQA is governed by a nine member Board; with the majority consisting of consumers of in-home care services. These Board members provide an independent voice for consumers, give direction to staff and are consistently united in their advocacy for consumer choice. And, as intended, the Board provides a meaningful opportunity for people with disabilities of all ages to contribute to the development of our State's evolving long term care system.

Operating the Home Care Referral Registry is one of the principal responsibilities of HCQA. As a distinctive state agency, HCQA is very focused on success of the Registry and its responsiveness to consumers and their needs. Because of its small size, HCQA has the ability to maintain flexibility in a dynamic business environment where problems are corrected swiftly, programs maintain high levels of adaptability and quality is assured.

HCQA also develops high quality educational materials that support vulnerable adults and their families. These publications and videos are widely requested by consumers, long term care organizations and disability rights organizations around the State.

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## Referral Registry Makes a Difference for Consumers.

Every month HCQA mails a survey to consumers who have utilized the Registry to help them find a home care provider during the prior month. Questions on the survey range from the level of customer service provided by local Registry staff, timeliness of service, to accuracy of referrals and, ultimately if the Registry was able to help them find a suitable provider. A summary of results are compiled and distributed to Registries monthly, helping staff to adjust as needed and to recognize the benefits the Registry offers to people in their respective communities. A sampling of the comments that have come back with the surveys are posted below:

- *You helped me to find a wonderful care provider; she is just what I was looking for.*
- *Through the Registry, I was interviewing (providers) within six hours and hired one of three great candidates. In the past I ran an ad in the paper and interviewed around 25 people and ended up hiring the wrong person.*
- *A system that allows a person the choice of who comes into their home to provide this kind of help is right and fair. I am glad for the help of the Registry staff.*
- *The (Registry Coordinator) is an excellent provider herself, with information and fast response.*

**The Home Care Referral Registry** matches the needs of those who receive publicly funded in-home long term care services with pre-qualified in-home care providers. If you are receiving state funded in-home services and would like more information on how to hire a home care provider, contact the Home Care Referral Registry office at: 1-800-970-5456.

### Home Care Referral Registry Service Areas



**\* Note - Registry offices/service areas closed due to recent budget cuts are indicated in gray.**

If you are receiving state funded in-home services and would like more information on how to hire a home care provider, contact the Home Care Referral Registry office at 1-800-970-5456.

### Resources for Consumers: How to Hire Video and Resource Guide

- **YOUR CHOICE Video: *How to Hire an Individual Provider*** - Complimentary DVD's are available by contacting HCQA, or you can view at: <http://www.youtube.com/hcqa>
- **STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE: a *Resource Guide for seniors and Adults with Disabilities Living at Home*** Complimentary copies are available through the Department of Printing General Store: <https://fortress.wa.gov/prt/printwa/wsprt/default.asp>

For more information or assistance with ordering your copies of the DVD or the Resource Guide contact HCQA at 1-866-580-4272 or e-mail your request to: [info@hcqa.wa.gov](mailto:info@hcqa.wa.gov)



### Supporting TBI Survivors: New Self-Study Guide Available

***Strategies for Surviving and Thriving with Traumatic Brain Injury*** (TBI) is a self study training for TBI caregivers or professionals working with TBI survivors and their families to learn more about TBI and supporting TBI survivors. The training includes a workbook and DVD.

ADSA developed this course with the participation of people living with a TBI, families, advocates and professionals. Course development and distribution is one of the outcomes of TBI Grants implemented by ADSA funded by U.S. Department of Health and Human Service grant # 5 H21MC06765-03-00.

The workbook covers topics including an overview of TBI and the brain before and after a TBI, physical and cognitive changes and TBI, challenges of caregiving and how to help, emotional and behavioral changes, and supporting recovery. The DVD features stories of TBI survivors in Washington State and their caregivers.

To view a copy on-line go to [http://www.tbiwashington.org/professionals/caregiver\\_training\\_video.shtml](http://www.tbiwashington.org/professionals/caregiver_training_video.shtml)



## HCQA Board Members

- ❖ Elizabeth Brown, Chair, Vancouver
- ❖ Andy Bell, Union
- ❖ Thomas Bungert, Tacoma
- ❖ Stan Fukui, Bothell
- ❖ Jesse Magana, Vancouver
- ❖ Dennis Mahar, Olympia
- ❖ Nicki Thomas, Cathlamet
- ❖ Shawn Latham, Puyallup
- ❖ Open Position

## Upcoming Board Meetings

- February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 10:00am – 3:00pm
- April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 10:00am – 3:00pm
- June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 10:00am – 3:00pm

All meetings are located in the HCQA Board Room,  
4317 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Suite 101, Lacey, WA 98503

**The Home Care Quality Authority Board** consists of nine members appointed by the governor. Each board member serves a term of three years (RCW79.39A.230). The board includes at least five members who are currently using or have formerly used in-home care services. **For more information about HCQA and their Board visit [www.hcqa.wa.gov](http://www.hcqa.wa.gov)**

## Help Keep the Holidays Merry and Bright by Giving Safe Toys and Gifts to Children

Although toy safety regulations and enforcement have been improved, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has had 38 toy recalls in 2009 alone. That is why Prevent Blindness America, the nation's oldest eye health and safety organization, has declared December as Safe Toys and Gifts Month. The group is offering toy-buying and gift-giving tips to all those planning to purchase a gift for a child this year.

Learn what products have been recalled, contact the CPSC at (800) 638-2772 or go to [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). For more information on safe toys and gifts, please visit Prevent Blindness America at [www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org) or call (800) 331-2020.



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